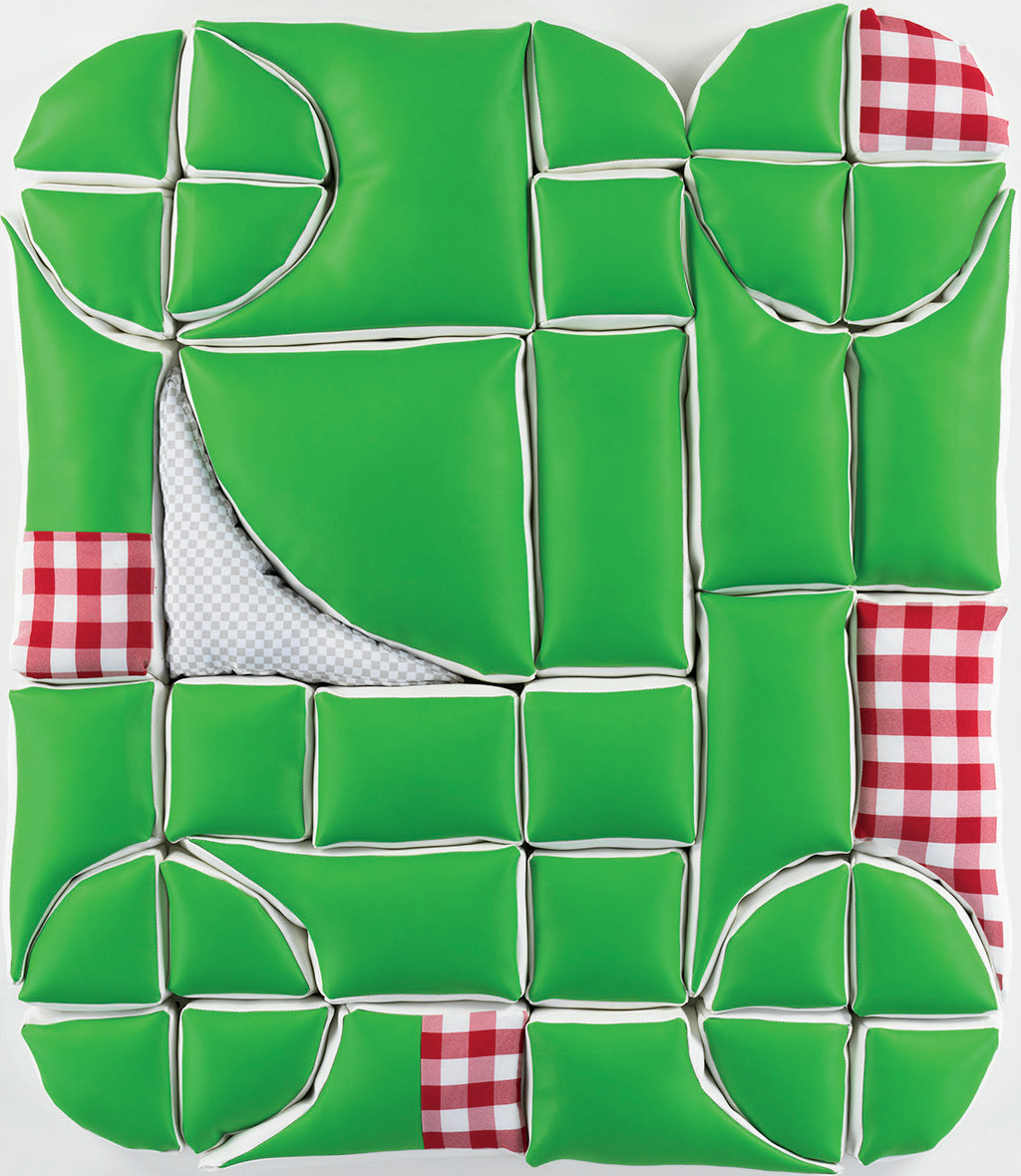


MFA | FINE ARTS



School of Visual Arts
Graduate Programs

The MFA Fine Arts program reflects

the diversity of New York's many art worlds. Together, the faculty and students form a community of established and emerging artists from various backgrounds who work across disciplines and modes of practice. We respect craft and form, but we also encourage an approach to art making in which ideas or questions serve as points of departure for artistic processes that may lead in unforeseen directions. While some students remain committed to a single medium for the duration of their study, most of them experiment with multiple modes of production.

In addition to drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture, students work in animation, digital art, installation, performance, photography, public projects, social practice, video, and numerous other disciplines. Students in the MFA Fine Arts program have the freedom to reinvent themselves.

The close relationship between faculty and students gives students the confidence to take risks and to follow a personal course of intellectual and aesthetic investigation.

The MFA Fine Arts program attracts ambitious emerging artists from many countries and backgrounds. Collectively, they create a foundation for artistic growth that extends beyond graduation and becomes an ongoing platform of professional support.

Our main goals are to provide a stimulating and supportive environment in which students can thrive and develop as artists in order to foster rigorous critical engagement with contemporary art and other cultural forms, as well as to produce a continuous conversation—through work as much as through words—about what we make, how we make it and why.

—Mark Tribe, chair

About the Program

MFA Fine Arts is a full-time, interdisciplinary graduate program in the practice of contemporary art. The normal course of study is two years of full-time enrollment. Our curriculum is designed to ensure that students form strong connections with faculty through multiple one-on-one meetings, usually in the student's studio. Each student selects a faculty mentor at the start of the program and may continue with the same mentor for the duration of the program. In group critiques, students develop their ability to receive feedback and to offer constructive criticism. Students deepen their knowledge of contemporary art, theory and art history in elective seminars, and cultivate the skills necessary to build sustainable careers in professional development workshops. Seminars and workshops often take advantage of our central location to visit galleries, museums and professional artists' studios in New York City. The Talks course features lectures by artists, curators and art historians, as well as presentations by our own students. Each spring, we conduct annual reviews in which faculty and external reviewers evaluate student work. The MFA Thesis includes an ambitious art project or body of work, a presentation and a portfolio.

Each student is given a private studio with 24-hour access. MFA Fine Arts has an equipment library with cameras, lights, sound recorders, projectors, screens, and other media

gear used by students to make and show their work. Our media studio features Mac workstations, a high-quality scanner and free printing on large-format Epson inkjet printers. Students also have access to extensive digital fabrication resources—such as 3D printing, CNC routing, laser cutting and digital embroidery—at the Visible Futures Lab, in addition to many other facilities at SVA, including the Bio Art Lab, Printmaking Studio, RisoLAB and Sculpture Center.

Students are given multiple opportunities for professional exposure, including studio visits with visiting artists, curators and critics; open studios; curated exhibitions in SVA's galleries; and our annual MFA Thesis Exhibition. Many students also exhibit their work off-campus in galleries and other venues. Students often work on campus at SVA's galleries, Sculpture Center, Library and Writing Resource Center. A number of them have found employment as assistants in artists' studios as well.

A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is required for degree conferral. The normal course of study is two years of full-time enrollment. Satisfactory progress usually means that students complete 15 credits each semester, and pass an annual review of work.



LaTonia Allen (MFA 2020) demonstrating *(t)here*, an installation by Ridhima Mukim (MFA 2019).

Scratching the Creative Itch

Dylan Rose Rheingold (MFA 2022 Fine Arts) stays true to what she wants. From double majoring in business and art at Syracuse University to working for Burberry and Universal Music Group, she's taken a varied path to get to the gallery artist life she leads now, but every detour proved to be hardly a detour at all. Instead, Dylan has found herself on a unique track that allowed her to develop her unique voice as an artist.



ABOVE: Dylan Rose Rheingold (MFA 2022 Fine Arts) in her studio.

BELOW: Dylan's work on display at the Chicago Expo 2024.

Although she says, "For as long as I can remember, I've always taken an interest in art," she didn't believe she would have a career as a painter because she didn't "have any connections." But since "being an artist in a commercial industry was not scratching the itch," she felt an MFA program would give her the skills, connections and time she needed to build her dream career. And that's when SVA's MFA Fine Arts program entered her life.

Dylan's top priority was access to studio space. Crucially, the MFA "gave me the time that I needed to think and develop my work." She describes the MFA as an independent study led by working artists who served more as mentors than instructors: "It's up to you what you want to achieve and what you want to get out of it."

Looking at the twisted, lurching girls riding the Tilt-a-Whirl of adolescence and early adulthood on her mixed-media

canvases, it's perhaps appropriate that Dylan describes her growth as an artist similarly, capturing the dizzying, shifting-the-world's-balance thrill of pursuing one's passion. In MFA Fine Arts, she describes a transcendent moment of "falling" into her voice. She explains, "It took me a long time to realize that everyone's voice is different, and you should really lean into yourself."

Her youthful, cheeky, and refreshingly contemporary style challenges traditional artistic conventions and subject matters. A motif of gawky and disembodied limbs emerges from Dylan's canvases. Reflections, double meanings and the gaze are as recognizably key to Dylan's style as are the tangles of arms and legs. A whirlwind of jewel tones, chalky pastels, bruised hues and highlighter colors are hallmarks of that unique voice she has worked so hard to fall into.

An Artist's Eclectic Journey

Yam Chew Oh's (MFA 2019 Fine Arts) story is a testament to the idea that the path beyond an MFA is wide, open and eclectic. His experience in the MFA program at SVA was both inspiring and challenging: "The two years were intense in a crazy city like New York, but that was invigorating to me." It remains "one of the best things [he's] ever done for [himself] in so many years."



ABOVE: Yam Chew Oh in his studio.

BELOW: *You've also been naughty lately!*, 2018, found wooden block and sculpture, LED light strip, used air bubble bag and plastic bag and screw, approximately 38 x 12 6/8 x 15 7/8" (left), approximately 12 x 12 x 1 6/8 inches (right).



Currently, Yam Chew teaches writing and literature to first-year students at SVA. His pedagogy centers on improving students' critical thinking through argumentation and persuasion with a focus on critical theory. Yam Chew finds that being a practicing artist helps him relate to his students. He considers teaching as a part of his artistic practice: "It so happens that I'm also an artist, so I can relate to you," he often tells them.

Yam Chew spent his formative years in a few of the now-extinct villages of Singapore, majored in human geography and Southeast Asian studies, and had an 18-year established career in international public relations. He led a completely different life until he discovered the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), to which he applied and where he completed a post-baccalaureate certificate in fine art.

MICA awakened an undeniable urge within Yam Chew. He needed to pursue a career in the arts: "Something just exploded; it was as if someone had a key to my heart somewhere and opened a door where everything that's been repressed for years came out." An "unraveling,"

as Yam Chew calls it, struck the core of his being and his identity. He gave up a very successful corporate trajectory and applied to the MFA Fine Arts program at SVA. Yam Chew wanted to accomplish two goals: the first was to deepen his practice and engagement with the arts, and the second was to teach.

Beyond expanding his knowledge in the arts and his practice, one of the most important aspects of the MFA program was building a community. Yam Chew made amazing friends in the program, even though he was older than most MFA students. He suddenly found himself surrounded by a great group of people that he truly bonded with. He believes that SVA's environment allowed for that level of connection.

His years of studying fine arts rekindled his passion for teaching. Yam Chew was influenced by many of the educators in his life, and his passion for being one had followed him throughout his studies. He sees it as a way to "pay it forward," to pass on to the next generation all the wisdom that his teachers have passed on to him.

Curriculum/ Sample Program

FIRST YEAR/FALL

	CREDITS
Colloquium	3
Mentorship I	3
Studio I	1
Crit I	3
Talks	2
1 Seminar or 2 Workshops	3

FIRST YEAR/SPRING

Mentorship II	3
Studio II	1
Crit II	3
Talks	2
Seminars and/or Workshops	6

SECOND YEAR/FALL

Mentorship III	3
Studio III	1
Crit III	3
Talks	2
Seminars and/or Workshops	6

SECOND YEAR/SPRING

Thesis Seminar	3
Mentorship IV	3
Crit IV	3
Studio IV	1
Talks	2
1 Seminar or 2 Workshops	3

Ferguson Amo (MFA 2019),
*Contingent Identity Cards of The
African Diaspora.*



Course Offerings

A sample of our course offerings follows. Note that seminar and workshop topics change from year to year; those listed below are intended as examples and may not be offered every year. A complete list of our courses can be found online at sva.edu/mfinearts/curriculum.

COLLOQUIUM

This course provides first-year students with space and time to get to know one another by discussing contemporary art and related issues. Students give presentations on contemporary artists whose work is relevant to their own; discuss the work of these artists; and attend lectures on modern, postmodern and contemporary art. Students take Colloquium in the first semester.

MENTORSHIP

In mentorship, students have the opportunity to work individually with a faculty mentor on an ongoing basis, beginning in the first semester. Mentors provide individual feedback on student work, discuss related issues and offer guidance on matters of professional development during a series of one-on-one meetings. Meetings are scheduled by mentors in consultation with their mentees. Students take one section of Mentorship each semester and have the option to continue working with the same mentor for the duration of the program.

STUDIO

Studio enables students to work individually with a different faculty member each semester. Faculty provide feedback on student work and discuss related issues during a series of individually scheduled studio visits that should total three hours per semester. Students are required to take one section of Studio each semester.

CRIT

In crit, students learn how others see and understand their work, develop their ability to receive and offer feedback, and establish a shared language for discussing art. Crits run for seven weeks, giving each student the opportunity to present their work twice. The format and duration of each crit is determined by the instructor. Students enroll in two consecutive Crit sections each semester.

TALKS

The Talks course exposes students to the ideas and practices of contemporary artists and those who study and write about their work. In the fall semester, each student gives a five-minute presentation on their own work. These are followed by lectures by artists, writers and scholars. The spring semester concludes with thesis presentations by second-year students. Students take Talks every semester.



Yin Ming Wong (MFA 2023), *Ping pong all the time*, 2022, oil on canvas, 36 x 60 inches.

Seminars

Seminars may focus on specific issues in art history, theory and/or practice, or may survey broader topics. Seminars are developed by faculty in consultation with the chair and vary from year to year. Assignments may involve reading, writing, presentations, field trips and various forms of research, including creative projects. Fieldwork Seminars take place almost entirely outside the classroom: students visit galleries, museums, artists' studios, and other places of interest. Students must register for 21 credits in seminars and workshops over their course of study.

CREATIVE ADVENTURE

The artist's studio is a place for creative exploration, contemplation and production. It is also a place where artists show their work to peers, curators and gallerists, store their work, stare blankly into space, make messes and take naps. In this course, we will visit artists' studios each week, including the studios of SVA alumni and faculty. We may also visit some galleries, nonprofit venues and artist-run spaces, casting a large net outside the usual art-awareness zones. We will talk with artists about their work, their use of material and space, and what inspires them. We will explore a wide range of artistic practices and each student's own artistic processes through personal introspection and vigorous dialogue, creating self-awareness and enhancing vision. This course is designed to further each student's ability to formulate and articulate their own viewpoints on art making as well as standards for individual practice. Each student will keep a notebook—either in writing or audio recordings—to document insights, interpretations and ideas for future investigations into the creative adventure.

museums; watching films; and meeting with guest historians, critics and artists. Throughout the semester, students will develop their own artistic "family tree": an art-centered historic timeline that contextualizes their practice in relation to cultural figures, works or events (this can be a visual, annotated chart or another form). The goal is for students to synthesize their knowledge of contemporary art and its precedents, think analytically about their work and its contexts, and communicate their ideas effectively in conversation and presentations.

ART HISTORIES

This course introduces artists to the significant art practices, theories and institutions of the past half century. We will focus on two artworks in each session and consider them in relation to key historic events and discourses. Students will contribute actively to each class by suggesting (and researching) an artwork, reading primary and secondary texts, and writing short responses. We will also be visiting galleries and



ON PAINTING

What are the guises of painting in the 21st century? From puddle to detail, from digital technologies and built constructions to traditional craft and representation, we consider the various methodologies, their precedents and what they mean to us now. Each week, we will discuss another approach, using examples in galleries, on screens and in our studios. How are concepts manifest in their relation to material and process? By investigating the implications of artists' actions, we will be better able to take responsibility for our own decisions in the studio.

Carlos Rosales-Silva (MFA 2020), *Semilla*, 2022, acrylic plastic, dyed stones, crushed stone and glass bead in acrylic paint on custom panel, 23 x 17 inches.

Workshops

Workshops focus on skills and strategies for creating and taking advantage of professional opportunities. Students must register for 21 credits in seminars and workshops over their course of study.

Shannon Stovall (MFA 2019), still from
Gold/Milk/Dresser/Lampshade.



DIY EXHIBITIONS

In this workshop, students work together to organize and install an exhibition of their own work in a New York City gallery. Although the instructor arranges the venue (usually one of the smaller commercial galleries on the Lower East Side), students are actively engaged in every other aspect of making a DIY exhibition. Key aspects of the process include determining the theme of the exhibition; deciding what to contribute (this may be existing work or new work made specifically for the show); packing and delivering the work; coordinating with venue staff; negotiating the placement of work within the space; sharing ideas about the work and how it is installed; considering nonstandard approaches to presentation that engage audiences in active discovery (“nesting” vs. “plopping”); providing artist bios and descriptions; titling and promoting the exhibition; and planning an opening reception. Students build solidarity with their peers, have fun and gain practical experience that will prepare them to organize their own group exhibitions in the future.

THE COLD CALL

Artists often think they have to wait for an opportunity to knock on their doors. Whether your goal is to exhibit your work, organize an event, publish an artist book or get funding for a project, this workshop will show you how to cultivate and pursue opportunities by doing research, preparing to make contact, reaching out, making the ask and following up. You will learn how to home in on the opportunities that make sense for your work, organize your research, reach someone without a referral, make a cold call and manage expectations. Building community and audience are integral and intertwined in this process and are stressed throughout.

GRANTS AND RESIDENCIES

Grants, fellowships and residencies are an important part of developing an artist's career. How do you learn about them, how do you apply to them and how do you make a successful application? How do you evaluate which ones are the best fit for you and your goals? We will discuss researching various funding opportunities for artists and artist projects. The workshop will address selecting images for applications and how to write statements tailored to the focus of specific funders. Students will complete mock applications for funding and support opportunities. We will look at how to make the most of a residency as well as how to research tools available for seeking funding, support or fiscal sponsorship. Plus, we will prepare for writing budgets, developing long-term relationships with funders, and more.

Faculty

To learn more about the faculty members and to read their biographies, visit: sva.edu/mfinearts/faculty.

Mark Tribe, chair

Uri Aran

Dara Birnbaum

Rico Gatson

Brad Kahlhamer

Baseera Khan

Sharon Loudon

Miguel Luciano

Suzanne McClelland

Glendalys Medina

Marilyn Minter

Jayson Musson

William Powhida

James Siena

Jennifer Wen Ma

Wong Kit Yi



Ferguson Amo (MFA 2019), *Dual Self*.

Notable Alumni

Katherine Bernhardt

Inka Essenhigh

Yuan Fang

Joe Fig

Johan Grimonprez

Yirui Jia

Georgia Lale

Michelle Lopez

Suzanne McClelland

Dylan Rose Rheingold

Diana Shpungin

Christine Sun Kim

Sarah Sze

Marvin Touré

Phoebe Washburn

Fine Arts: Residency in Contemporary Practices

- See sva.edu/mfinearts for up-to-date information
- 4 undergraduate studio credits per session
- \$3,200 per session/\$6,400 for both sessions

This intensive studio residency, hosted by SVA's MFA Fine Arts Department, has been designed for artists working in both medium-specific and cross-platform modes of production that aim for the intersection of art and ideas. Taught by distinguished members of the MFA Fine Arts faculty, the residency fosters a culture of rigorous practice and contemporary thought.

Each artist will have use of a private studio located in New York City's Chelsea gallery district. Daily studio visits from renowned artists, curators and theorists support an ongoing discourse among an international community of fellow artists. In addition to concentrated work in the studio, artists will attend lectures, gallery walks, museum visits and workshops that support a professional art practice. Through focused creative engagement with the history and criticism of contemporary art, participants will be encouraged by a faculty of leading artists and scholars to take their work to the next level, aesthetically and conceptually. Faculty and guest lecturers will represent a variety of contemporary perspectives.

While the focus of the residency is on content and critical discourse, work in a variety of media is supported and encouraged, including drawing, painting, photography,

performance, installation, digital and interactive media, electronics, sound and all modes of experimental practice. Artists committed to a single form or medium can expect to delve deeper into the material concerns of their practice. Residents are also invited to consider the sociopolitical potentiality of art practices situated outside the paradigm of individual authorship, via forays into social practice and public forms. Ultimately, the goal of the program is to create an inclusive space for artistic research, activated by the spirit of inquiry.

Participants will have access to SVA's Visible Futures Lab and the opportunity to work with state-of-the-art tools for both digital and traditional fabrication.

Faculty and guest lecturers have included: Dara Birnbaum, Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow, Media Farzin, Mark Thomas Gibson, Baseera Khan, Miguel Luciano, Angel Nevarez, Juan Puentes, Jacob Rhodes, David Ross, Jerry Saltz, Mark Tribe and Caroline Woolard.

Application Process

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

For a full list of application requirements and detailed instructions, visit:

sva.edu/grad/howtoapply

- Online Application and \$80 Application Fee:
sva.edu/apply

DEADLINES

For information on application deadlines, visit:

sva.edu/grad/timeline

IMPORTANT LINKS

- FAQ: sva.edu/grad/faq
- International students:
sva.edu/grad/intl
- Tuition and fees:
sva.edu/tuition
- Visit SVA:
sva.edu/grad/visit

Yuan Fang (MFA 2022), *Bursting 03*, 2022, acrylic, spray paint and oil pastel on canvas, 54 x 64 inches.



Contact Us

We encourage applicants to visit our department. Contact us directly to schedule a departmental tour or sign up to attend an Information Session. For more information and to register, go to: sva.edu/grad/visit.

If you have any questions about the application process, contact Graduate Admissions at 212.592.2107 or email: gradadmissions@sva.edu.

Mark Tribe, chair

Nelson Santos, academic advisor

Isabelle Schipper, program coordinator

Katreen Sorokina, director of operations

Tel: 212.592.2500

Email: mfafinearts@sva.edu

Site: sva.edu/mfafinearts

Department site: mfafinearts.sva.edu



“I loved SVA immediately. It was the rawness, youngness and positivity. It was like a rough diamond. I wanted to be part of the bigger world.”

—Hrafnhildur Arnardóttir (MFA 1996)

ACCREDITATION

The School of Visual Arts has been authorized by the New York State Board of Regents (www.highered.nysed.gov) to confer the degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts on graduates of programs in 3D Animation and Visual Effects; Advertising; Animation; Comics; Design; Film; Fine Arts; Illustration; Interior Design; Photography and Video; Visual and Critical Studies; and to confer the degree of Master of Arts on graduates of programs in Art Education; Curatorial Practice; Design Research, Writing and Criticism; and to confer the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching on graduates of the program in Art Education; and to confer the degree of Master of Fine Arts on graduates of programs in Art Practice; Computer Arts; Design; Design for Social Innovation; Fine Arts; Illustration as Visual Essay; Interaction Design; Photography, Video and Related Media; Products of Design; Social Documentary Film; Visual Narrative; and to confer the degree of Master of Professional Studies on graduates of programs in Art Therapy; Branding; Digital Photography; Fashion Photography; Film Directing.

The School of Visual Arts is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (msche.org), 1007 North Orange Street, 4th Floor, MB #166, Wilmington, DE 19801, 267-284-5011. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.

COVER: Tom Hecht (MFA 2023), *Tout Court*, 2023, fabric, stuffing and wood, 44 x 38 x 4 inches.

The Interior Design program leading to the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design is accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (accredit-id.org), 206 Grandville Avenue, Suite 305, Grand Rapids, MI, 49503-4014.

SVA is a member in good standing of the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP), a national accrediting organization recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. The MAT program in Art Education has been awarded full accreditation by AAQEP through December 31, 2030. Accreditation acknowledges that a program prepares effective educators who continue to grow as professionals and has demonstrated the commitment and capacity to maintain quality.

The MPS Art Therapy program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (www.caahep.org) upon the recommendation of the Accreditation Council for Art Therapy Education. Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs, 25400 US Hwy 19N, Suite 158, Clearwater, FL 33763, 727-210-2350. The program meets all educational requirements for licensure in New York State as a Creative Arts Therapist (LCAT) and Registered Art Therapist (ATR) with the Art Therapy Credentials Board (ATCB).

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School of Visual Arts

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